

Before the  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
Washington, DC, 20554

In the Matter of )  
Creation of a Low ) MB Docket No. 99-25  
Power Radio )  
Service )

My name is Dirk DeVault and I strongly support any actions the Federal Communications Commission can take to expand and support the Low Power FM radio service.

I have been involved with radio in a broad sense, since I was a child. My mother sang on the local AM radio station, WJEJ in Hagerstown, MD. I would visit the owner of this station on a regular basis and sit with him and listen to the station in his office. He filled my mind with many images of the stations involvement in local entertainment and news.

When I became a young man, I had the desire to provide a more diversified programming content to the people of Hagerstown. I, and a few of my friends, found that this was not easy. An opening for a channel frequency had to exist, and even then we were told that the frequency allocation would be open to a sort of auction for ownership. All of this meant you had to have a lot of money to play the broadcast game. My friends and I opted to cablecast through the local cable company. This was 1979. We enjoyed many years of providing alternative programming to the local community and providing an outlet for peoples creativity. As I look back, it is truly amazing the amount of people who came to us wanting to be involved in RADIO!

I know that LPFM stations are terribly needed in all cities. Voices are needed to be heard. Programming content needs to be diverse. For myself, music is what drives my main interest in radio programming. I remember when FM radio came into being. It was a great relief from the heavily commercial burdoned AM radio hype. Eventually FM became polluted with the same hype. All of the

creativity is now gone for the most part. Now those seeking the creativity of the past are turning to internet or satellite radio. This creativity continues to be pushed farther away from the general public. I long for the days of WAMU bluegrass programming, WGTB and WHFS progressive free form programming to name a few.

These days on my FM radio dial there are at least six NPR stations on the left end of the dial between 88.1 and 90.9. And they all have essentially the same content! So much for diversity.

I agree with The Prometheus Radio Project and their "FOURTEEN AND A HALF WAYS THE FCC COULD IMPROVE LOW POWER FM RADIO".

#### 1. Take Action to Fix the Rules

The Petitions for reconsideration need action.

#### 2. Primary Sources

Grant Low Power Radio stations primary status.

#### 3. Why Is It Easier To Amend The Constitution Than Your 100 Watt Radio License?

Making necessary changes to your low power license must be simpler.

#### 4. Boards Should Not Be Stiff...

Adopt new rules addressing the reality of changes in personnel on non-profit boards.

#### 5. Under Construction

LPFM Construction Permits should last 3 years, not 18 months.

#### 6. We Want Local Oscillators!

Reevaluate radio translator policies to eliminate non-commercial translators that do not originate local broadcast programming.

#### 7. Don't Make Another Digital Divide

Evaluate IBOC (terrestrial digital radio) to identify policies that will promote the carriage of LPFM stations digitally.

#### 8. Let Us Be Verified, Not Certified.

Clarify LPFM station's obligations to use type-certified equipment.

#### 9. Put The C Back In FCC

Regular communication will help prevent low power FMs from assuming they have been lost in the shuffle.

#### 10. Separation Anxiety

Create a second application window for LPFMs that want to submit contour overlap engineering studies.

#### 11. Give us Schedules

A publicly posted schedule is sorely needed for Low Power Applications.

#### 12. Don't forget Radio!

Add staff to the audio division so that all these recommendations can be done.

#### 13. Really Promote Localism

Promote Localism By Checking The Claims Made On License Applications

#### 14. How Established is Your Community Presence?

Clear Up Ambiguities About In The Counting Of Preference Points.

#### 14.5 Don't Be Shy!

Explain the Results of the MITRE study to the public.

Finally, the radio dial needs to be revitalized. Media reform in the sense of more diversity and more ownership. Create as many LPFM stations as can be squeezed in. Also media ownership rules must be looked at again. A healthy economic market cannot exist if only a few large corporations own most of the broadcast outlets. These are public airwaves. You are the caretakers only. The content of the airwaves needs to be diverse and fresh for us to flourish.